



# The LongPath

A North Alabama DX Club Publication

## Special points of interest:

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Well I had high hopes of getting 3Y0I into the log several times by now. I suspect our brotherhood will be going after Bouvet Island with a vengeance after the weather did us in one more time. The guys had a good, albeit small, boat but the eye of the hurricane was sitting right over the island, and it stayed right there day after day! Let's hope they're just down and not out. The season isn't totally over quite yet. Even if it's winter, they have to arrive other than in the middle of the furious storm.

DX for me in March was a little better than in February. I got a couple of band-countries, but I certainly remember back to better years. A couple of ATNO cards also arrived via OQRS. Looking at the Announced DX Ops coming up in April I see 11 of them are single ops only, while 8 DXpeditions are multi-ops. Those are the ones we'll more likely hear, but there sure aren't many. Several months this year have one or fewer DXpeditions currently being reported.

## From the President

The end of the major contest season is upon us already. Tonight's CQ WPX phone contest leaves about one left. That means antenna repair season has arrived. And it certainly has – the weather has warmed and the rain has temporarily stopped. A wind storm ripped my beautiful 160m inverted L to shreds. Gotta put a better one back up (needs about 10 feet more stretch). The warm weather also means it's time for hamfests. I am going to Dayton again. Anyone travelling further than me to a hamfest?

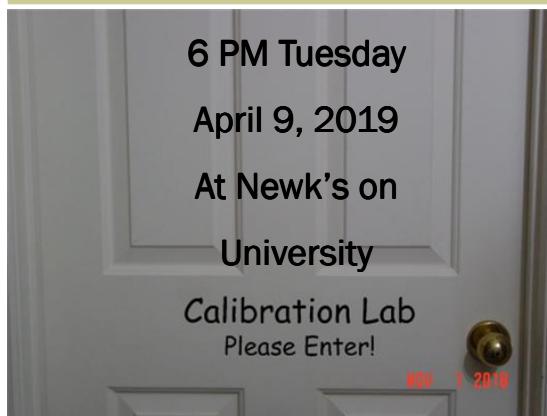
The search for a banquet speaker goes on. Letters have gone out. One of these is going to score. More ideas always coming in. We'll have a great banquet. Get your tickets now!

73,

Bob K8KI

## April Program: Calibrating a Bird Model 43 Wattmeter

By John Stensby, N5DF



## How to Join

- \* Come to a club meeting;
- \* or send in an application by mail (form on [www.NADXC.org](http://www.NADXC.org))

\* or call  
Tom Duncan at  
(256)705-2147

For decades, the Bird Model 43 RF wattmeter (*Bird* in ham-radio parlance) has been a fixture in many ham shacks. It is a small, portable, easy-to-use wattmeter for measuring forward and reflected power in a coaxial transmis-

sion line. The meter uses plug-in “slugs”, or “elements”, for different power and frequency ranges, from QRP to QRO and from Top Band to S Band. Purchased new, “slugs” are pricey. However, at reasonable prices, second-hand “slugs” can be found at hamfest flea markets and online auction sites. But, they may be in need of refurbishment and recalibration.

The April NADXC program summarizes my “slug” calibration efforts. Come learn how to minimize the risk, and maximize the utility and fun, of owning and using a venerable *Bird*.

## March Meeting Minutes

By Chris Reed, AI4U, NADXC Secretary/Treasurer

### Attendance

Members 21 & guests 1

### Review of Sign-in Sheet & DX worked

Walt AJ6T C3 new one on 40m

Ralph K1KOB HD8M on cw 30m and 12m

Tom KG4CUY T31

Kelley W4VPZ Honduras, Haiti #95 and #96 toward DXCC confirmed

Steve AG4W T31 160 - 15m, PYOF 160m, and 7P8 80m

### Announcements

Bob welcomed guests to the meeting.

New members below were approved:

Billy Gold KM4BGF, president of the Huntsville Amateur Radio Club

AI4U Chris provided the February financial report.

Following the meeting, Mark Brown N4BCD gave a program: A "good enough" Low Band Antenna.

## March Financial Report

Balance \$9842.84 as of March 31.

### Icons

By the LongPath Staff



Every so often an iconic product emerges from the halls of industry. In some cases, the icon status outlives the commercial life of the product and in a strange way ensures the product lives on in lore if not in body: the 1951 Studebaker Champion and 1958 Ford Edsel are examples.

Closer to home in the realm of test equipment we have the BC-221 frequency meter, which being a thoroughly military item ended production with the end of WWII, but certainly lived on for many years as a frequency standard of sorts in many a hamshack. Not all these icons are dead production-wise: the Simpson 260 VOM is now in version 8: my second VOM was a 260-3P back in about 1977, which eventually

fell off the bumper of a truck where it was being used to check out a trailer harness and was replaced by a 260-6 I still have.

All these things fall into the icon category because they stand out in a crowd. No Edsel was ever confused with another model car. No BC-221 sitting on a hamfest flea market table — at least if it had the cover open — was ever mistaken by an old-timer for some other piece of military equipment, although to be fair many a homebrewer scavenged the tuning mechanism and case as the basis for a homebrew receiver.

So it is with the Bird 43. Like Simpson, Bird is still around, and the Bird 43 is still in production—check out Wikipedia for some details. No-one seeing a Bird 43 from the back side at 20 paces ever accused it of being a grid-dip meter or a homebrew SCAF filter—it smacks of Bird 43.

Don't miss John, N5DF's presentation about calibrating Bird slugs on Tuesday, April 9th. If you've been thinking the Bird is getting a little won-

ky in its advanced age, maybe it's those slugs. John will shed light on this. Be there!

### The LongPath Staff

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Tom Duncan, KG4CUY

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Chuck Lewis, N4NM, DX Contests

Chris Reed, AI4U, Minutes

Bob De Pierre, K8KI, From the President

### NADXC Officers and Directors

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Directors **Tom Duncan, KG4CUY**



## DX Contests for April

By Chuck Lewis, N4NM

### LZ Open 40 Meter Sprint Contest (CW), 40M

Apr. 6, 0400Z to Apr. 7, 0800Z

Exchange: Serial, plus S/N received from previous QSO

See: Page 87, APRIL QST and [www.lzopen.com](http://www.lzopen.com)

### SP DX Contest, (CW, SSB), 160-10M

Apr. 6, 1500Z to Apr. 7, 1500Z

Exchange: RS(T) plus Serial (SPs send province)

See: page 87, Apr. QST and [www.spdxcontest.pzk.org](http://www.spdxcontest.pzk.org)

### EA RTTY Contest, (RTTY), 80 - 10M

Apr. 6, 1600Z to Apr. 7, 1600Z

Exchange: RSQ plus Province or Serial

See page 87, Apr. QST and [www.concursus.ure.es/en](http://www.concursus.ure.es/en)

### OK/OM DX Contest, (SSB), (160-10M)

Apr. 13, 1200Z to Apr. 14, 1200Z

Exchange: RS plus serial; OK/OM send RS plus county code (3 letters)

See: Page 87, April QST and [www.okomdx.crk.cz](http://www.okomdx.crk.cz)

### Yuri Gagarin International DX Contest, (CW), 160-10M

Apr. 13, 2100Z to Apr. 14, 2100Z

Exchange: RST, ITU zone

See Page 87, Apr. QST and [gc.qst.ru/en](http://gc.qst.ru/en)

### Japan Int'l. DX CW Contest (SSB), (160-10M)

Apr. 13, 0700Z to Apr. 14, 1300Z

Exchange: RST plus CQ zone; JAs send RST plus prefecture

See page 87, Apr. QST and [www.jidx.org](http://www.jidx.org)

### ES Open HF Championship, (CW & SSB), 80 & 40M

Apr 20, 0500Z to 0859Z,

Exchange: RS(T) plus Serial #

Note: Dups OK once per hour (see rules)

See Page 87, April QST and [www.erau.ee/en](http://www.erau.ee/en)

### Worked All Provinces of China, (CW & SSB), 80-10M

Apr, 20, 0600Z to April, 21, 0559Z

Exchange: RS(T), and serial (or BY province abbr.)

See page 87, April QST and [www.mulandxc.org](http://www.mulandxc.org)

### YU DX Contest (CW ), 160-10M

Apr. 20, 1200Z to Apr 21, 1159Z (see website for times)

Exchange: RST plus Serial # ; YUs send County

See page 87, April QST and [www.yudx.yu1srs.org.rs](http://www.yudx.yu1srs.org.rs)

### CQMM Contest, (CW), 80-10 meters

Apr. 20, 1200Z to Apr. 21, 2359Z

Exchange: RST, continent abbrev., category

See Page 84, Apr. QST and [www.cqmmdx.com](http://www.cqmmdx.com)

### UK/EI 80M Contest, (CW), 80-10M

Apr. 24, 2000 to Apr. 25, 2100Z

Exchange: 4-Char. Grid square

See page 84, Apr. QST and [www.ukeicc.com](http://www.ukeicc.com)



### SP DX RTTY Contest, (DIG), 80-10M

Apr. 27, 1200Z to Apr. 28, 1200Z

Exchange: RST, plus Serial # or SP province

See Page 87, Apr. QST and [www.pkrvg.org](http://www.pkrvg.org)

### Helvetia Contest, (CW, SSB, DIG.), 160-10M

Apr. 27, 1300Z to Apr. 28, 1259Z

Exchange: RS(T) plus Serial # or Swiss canton

See Page 87, Apr. QST and [www.uska.ch](http://www.uska.ch)

### OTHERS:

#### Holyland DX Contest

April 19, 2100Z to Apr. 20, 2100Z

#### ARI International DX Contest

1200Z, May 4 to 1159Z, May 5

Dates & times often change or are misprinted in the journals; beware!

Chuck, N4NM